

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO DURING AN ANGRY EPISODE:

- ◆ Determine how frequent and how severe the anger is.
- ◆ Understand the cause of the child's anger.
- ◆ Be supportive and understanding and try to discuss child's concerns calmly.
- ◆ Provide consistent limits and rules for behavior.
- ◆ Time out: Ask an angry child to sit by him or herself for a short while. It is an effective way to allow a child to calm down even in public places.
- ◆ If parents become too angry, they should take time out to calm down and think more clearly.

If parents determine that their child's anger is interfering with the child's daily activities, progress in school and/or is causing problems within the family, it is time to seek professional help.

WHERE TO SEEK HELP:

- ◆ Public health centers and libraries where reading materials are provided.
- ◆ Professionals such as teachers, doctors, school guidance counselors or mental health workers.

For Information and Help Call:

1-703-533-3302



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Understanding and Managing Your Child's Anger



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WHEN DOES ANGER BECOME A PROBLEM?

All children get angry at times. This is normal and healthy. What is unhealthy and problematic is the child whose anger is severe, frequent and chronic and whose aggression results in harm to self and others.

Understanding anger in children and its causes is an important first step toward helping your child. There are many causes for this severe anger such as a response to trauma, loss or family stress.

SOME OF THE COMMON WAYS A CHILD SHOWS ANGER ARE:

- ♦ not following rules
- ♦ losing temper often
- ♦ having trouble at school or with the police
- ♦ threatening or hurting others
- ♦ stealing and lying
- ♦ running away from home

- ♦ acting in self-destructive ways
- ♦ withdrawing and becoming silent
- ♦ yelling, crying or complaining often

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT ANGRY CHILDREN

MYTH: Children who are angry are “bad” children who won’t listen to reason .

FACT: Children who are severely angry are not “bad.” They are usually dealing with other problems or traumas through anger and might not be capable of listening to reason.

MYTH: Anger in children is always caused by either strict parenting or a lack of discipline.

FACT: While strict parenting or lack of discipline can cause anger in a child, there could be many other reasons such as: depression, trauma, psychiatric disorders, medical illness, personality style, behavior disorders and stress (e.g., divorce or death in the family).

MYTH: Severe and long term anger is just a phase children go through. They will eventually grow out of it.

FACT: Anger during childhood does not go away by itself. In fact it could lead to more severe problems during adolescence and adulthood.

MYTH: Physical punishment and/or bribery are the only ways to deal with an angry child.

FACT: Physical punishment and/or bribery to keep an angry child quiet are not effective ways to handle anger. Physical punishment can increase a child’s anger, while bribery can reinforce the angry behaviors.

MYTH: There is no help for an angry child.

FACT: There are many ways in which an angry child can be helped at home by parents. In more severe and long term cases, parents might need to contact professionals for help.